

# Cajun Courier



926th Fighter Wing  
Air Force Reserve Command  
NAS JRB New Orleans, Louisiana  
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## Fit to fight or fit to sit

By Senior Airman Tallace Encalade

Are we fit to fight? Col. Steve Arthur, 926<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wing commander, is seeking an answer to that question.

"Deployed Airmen, especially from medical and support units, are spending more time 'outside the fence' and require higher levels of strength and stamina. As always, our training is driven by theater requirements, and fitness is a major requirement," said Colonel Arthur.

To date, an accurate evaluation of how physically fit wing members are does not exist. A physical fitness assessment was conducted last year but a large portion of the wing's personnel were not tested.

"Our goal is 100 % testing of all non-exempt personnel," the colonel said. To ensure wing members are ready to meet the physical challenges of a deployment, Colonel Arthur has changed how the wing conducts its physical fitness assessment.

There will be four quarterly fitness tests for calendar year 2005.

"Testing four times a year, gives you more of an opportunity to take the test, rather than an all or nothing one-time test," said 2ndLt. Christina Hills, 926th Services Flight operations officer. She was recently named the fitness coordinator for the wing. The first of the four physical fitness assessments took place during April's UTA. "The remaining quarterly tests are tentatively scheduled for June, August, and November," she said.

Lieutenant Hills serves as a facilitator and overseer of the program. "Physical training leaders are very important to the successfulness of this program," she said.



Photo by Senior Airman Tallace Encalade

**Tech. Sgt. David Richard, assistant NCO in charge of the aerospace ground equipment shop, performs sit-ups during the April UTA fitness test.**

Each squadron or unit commander appoints a PT leader, who must go through a course prior to giving the assessment. The PT leader is charged with the task of administering the assessment and reporting the results.

Each assessment will be hosted by the various wing groups. The host will provide spotters, road guards, cardio pulmonary resuscitation and automated external defibrillator support. The assessments are open to all members, but they must first coordinate it with their unit PT leader. Participants are required to have their squadron fitness monitor or alternate present to track and document their performance.

"This is great for members who score in

the marginal or poor category, since they must re-test every six months until they achieve a score of 75 or higher," said Colonel Arthur.

"My only expectation is that everyone applies the principals of a healthy lifestyle and show improvement," he said.

Members who score 75 or higher are only required to re-test every 12 months.

The assessment will focus on four areas: aerobic, muscular endurance, flexibility and body composition, said Lieutenant Hills. "Now is the time for everyone to incorporate a fitness regimen into their daily routine. We should make fitness a priority in our lives because it's the right thing to do."

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# Employer support important now more than ever

*By 1st Lt. Newman Robertson*

I have been in the Air Force Reserve and at the 926th Fighter Wing for more than 18 years. I remember the days when one weekend a month and a two-week summer camp was the norm for the average reservist. Anything over the norm was the exception and not the rule. The thought of being activated was just that, a thought, a remote possibility, something that could but would probably never happen.

I can remember going TDY and being called "weekend warrior" and "base exchange runner" by my active-duty counterparts. I also remember the days when we deployed as a unit. I was activated for Operations Desert Shield/Desert Storm and deployed with the group. I will never forget the hardship that I, as well as my family and employer, faced during the five months I was gone. I will never forget the love, the kind words, and the support that was shown to me from family, friends, and my employer.

Today, with all the contingencies in the world, the norm for the average reservist far exceeds one weekend a month and two weeks in the summer. The Air Force Reserve plays a vital role in the defense of this great nation and with such a fundamental role comes critical training. Training and deployments take time away from family, friends, especially jobs.

The Employer Support of the Guard and Re-

serve has recognized that employers are an integral part of this nation's defense. Employers are being called upon now more than ever to support their Guard and Reserve employees. They are being asked to provide physical, emotional and in some cases financial support to the families of their employees who have been deployed. Employers have to continue to manage their business without their valued employee. This is no easy task.

When we see on the news that a unit or squadron has been activated our hearts immediately go out to their families but no one seems to think of the effect this will have on the employer.

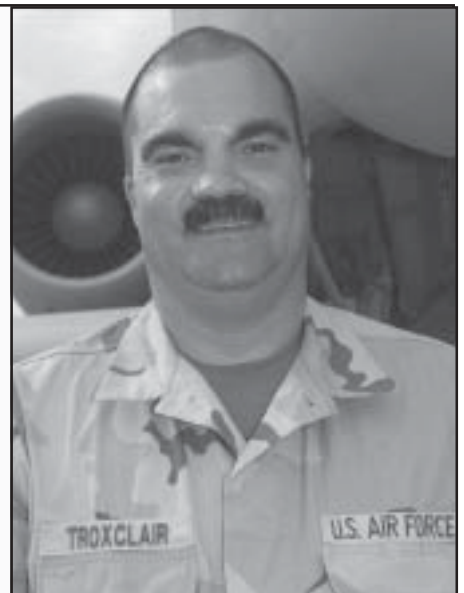
The ESGR has various recognition programs for those employers who have gone above and beyond for their Guard and Reserve employees. If your employer goes above and beyond to ensure that you have the time off that you need for Reserve duty you can visit the ESGR Web Site at [www.esgr.org](http://www.esgr.org) and submit your employer for one of the various awards. The Patriot Award which is automatically generated just by going to the Web site and filling out the application.

More importantly, just say, "Thanks for giving me the time off." Employers are a crucial part of our reserve life. Without their support, we could not and would not be an effective fighting force. Tell your employers how much you appreciate their support, and don't be afraid to talk about what you do in the Air Force Reserve.

## In Memory

**Danny Michael Troxclair**  
**Aug. 25, 1963 - April 2, 2005**

**926th Fighter Wing**  
**1985-2005**



# Bioenvironmental engineering team radiates assistance to wing members

*Story and photo by Staff Sgt. Jerry Mills*

An Airman walks across the flight line and suddenly hears three distinct horn blasts. Those sounds can mean only one thing – a chemical or biological attack. The Airman instinctively takes cover, dons and seals the chemical protective mask and takes a deep breath and a deeper sigh of relief.

Why the relief? Three weeks earlier the Airman visited the bioenvironmental engineering shop to have a quantitative mask fit test. Airmen know that a mask, with a proper fit test, is designed to prevent biological and chemical agents from entering the body through the mouth, nose and eyes.

Providing fit tests for gas masks, a mandatory deployment issue, is only part of what the bioenvironmental shop employees do to ensure the maximum environmental health for all members of the 926th Fighter Wing.

The civilian employees in the bioenvironmental engineering shop investigate and analyze conditions in the workplace which could negatively affect the health of the wing members and make recommendations to mitigate or eliminate such environmental hazards. "Our job is to protect employees and investigate hazards," said Mr. John Kirby, industrial hygienist for the wing. "Our proactive approach is to let you know that we are concerned about safety and health (of the wing members)."

Part of the proactive protection is conducting environmental/industrial hazard surveys. Such surveys include: respira-

tory; hearing conservation; ventilation; and indoor air quality, said Mr. Stephen Reese, environmental health technician. In addition, they also conduct radiation monitoring in areas that are under such risk.

"The workers feel we are valuable in areas such as noise concerns by conducting readings so that we can provide administrative controls over the work environment," said Mr. Reese.

Work areas prone to high environmental hazards are assessed on a routine basis to gather information on shop procedures, potential exposures and personal protective equipment use. Once the work areas are assessed, appropriate recommendations are made to help to control or eliminate exposure to environmental health hazards.

Another proactive process used to ensure the health of the wing members is an occupational health assessment visit. In cooperation with a physician and nurse from the medical squadron, the bioenvironmental team visits different shops to identify wing members' concerns and bring to light any environmental health concerns they may have, said Mr. Reese.

The team will also make a site visit if someone has a particular concern in a worksite. If



**Mr. Stephen Reese, 926th FW bioenvironmental health technician, uses a velocity meter to conduct air readings on the intake panels of a spray booth used to paint aircraft parts. The velocity meter checks the air flow to ensure the ventilation system inside the booth is working properly.**

there is an environmental concern, a three-step process is used to conduct an assessment which involves investigation, evaluation, and control, said Mr. Reese.

If a problem needs corrective action the Navy bioenvironmental office gets involved and works to remediate the problem, he said. Such situations could include removing mold from a building or repairing a ventilation system. After the Navy finishes the remediation a final check is done to ensure the en-

vironmental hazard is resolved.

Another value-added service provided by Mr. Reese and Mr. Kirby is assisting other shops in preparing for inspections. They also maintain a master file of material safety data sheets for all chemicals used by 926th Fighter Wing.

Anyone with environmental health concerns may call Mr. Kirby at 678-9876. Also, anyone needing a gas mask fit test, may go to Building 266 next to Hangar 4 during UTAs between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.



# Wing finance office earns top honors in AFRC awards

Story and photo by Tammy Prine

For some people, coming to work means just doing the basics of the job and watching the clock for the time to go home. But for members of the 926th Fighter Wing financial management office work means doing the basics and a whole lot more.

Headquarters Air Force Reserve Command recently announced the winners of the best FM organization for fiscal year 2004 and the group from New Orleans took top honors. In addition to the overall award three members were honored as the best at what they do throughout AFRC. Mr. Leroy Babin, Mrs. Jenny Armstrong and Mrs. Dorothy Wheeler were named outstanding in their fields.

According to Col. Steve Arthur, 926th FW commander, "the 926th FM organization provided sound financial services and advice throughout fiscal 2004 and effectively met enormous challenges through deployments, staff assistance visit and hurricanes. They met and exceeded all challenges well above all expectations."

The wing FM staff executed a large budget of more than \$33M while providing staff support for deployments and working with several position vacancies. The office manning was a constant 75 percent during fiscal 2004 but that didn't take away from the output. Travel settlements at the 926th have an average two-day processing time which is way above the AFRC/FM standard of five days.

"The 926th FM office is at the tip of the spear in service, performance and training," said Colonel Arthur. "They warrant recognition."

Mr. Babin instituted a number of policies and changes in the wing FM office earning him Financial Manager of the Year for AFRC.



**Individual award winners from the 926th Fighter Wing financial management office are from left: Mrs. Dorothy Wheeler, Mr. Leroy Babin and Mrs. Jenny Armstrong.**

Among his changes were monthly FM in-house training programs to build skills and depth of knowledge and an internal office awards programs to encourage cooperation and team work.

Mrs. Armstrong was chosen as Financial Analysis Civilian of the Year for GS-10 and below. During fiscal 2004 Mrs. Armstrong transferred into the budget world and brought with her a wealth of experience as an accounting liaison technician.

"She was a life saver to this organization," said Mr. Babin. "She mastered a new job and at the same time covered the accounting liaison office position that was vacant most of the year."

Mrs. Armstrong was identified as an outstanding performer by the 10th Air Force FM Staff Assistance Visit team.

Mrs. Wheeler was selected as the Quality Assurance Manager of the Year-Installation Level after earning a "Top Performer" award from the 10th Air Force Staff Assistance Visit team. She was recognized for creating and maintaining an FM training plan and an FM annual quality assurance plan.

Mrs. Wheeler organized and held all monthly FM training resulting in better trained personnel, better services and products.

"She is a highly motivated QAM with outstanding hands-on experience in military pay, accounting liaison office and the government travel card program," said Mr. Babin. "She has a proven track record of getting things done, having an outstanding dedication to duty and job performance. She always goes beyond the call of duty."

# Barnhill brings the blue to the Southwest bayou

By Staff Sergeant Jerry Mills

Even though he has only been with the 926th Fighter Wing's Recruiting Office for a few months, he already knows his way around recruiting.

Staff Sergeant Jeff Barnhill has worked as an active-duty recruiter for the Air Force and has developed a broad understanding for the needs of the Total Force. "As far as active-duty recruiting I feel that knowing both recruiting programs (active-duty and reserve) will help me steer my recruits in the right direction," said Sergeant Barnhill.

Sergeant Barnhill has a total of 15 years active-duty service with the Air Force. For the past three years, he was assigned to the 348th Recruiting Squadron, Little Rock Air Force Base, Ark., to work at the recruiting station in Monroe, La. For two of those years, he provided re-

cruiting services for the enlisted ranks and then he spent another year recruiting officers into the Air Force. Before he began his recruiting career, Sergeant Barnhill served 12 years at Barksdale AFB, La., as a medic.

Although Sergeant Barnhill will be working out of the Lafayette office, he will be covering 14 parishes to provide recruiting services as far north as DeRidder, La., and as far west as the Texas border.

Sergeant Barnhill sees this large catchment area as an opportunity. This opportunity is to "get the word out that the Air Force Reserve is here," said Sergeant Barnhill.

There are several strategies Sergeant Barnhill will be using in order to make sure he gets the word out. His first strategy is to develop a goal of "zone

awareness." This means getting out and letting people know what the Air Force Reserve is all about and the many opportunities the Air Force Reserve can offer.

A native of Ferriday, La., Sergeant Barnhill said he feels his strength is that he will be able to relate to those who live in Louisiana better because he has never left the state throughout his military career.

He knows the issues of those who live here. Sergeant Barnhill goes on to say, "I feel that being from Louisiana will help me because I know the area

and can relate to the people that I recruit because I have been in their shoes."

Sergeant Barnhill can be reached at (337) 269-4954.



Staff Sgt. Jeff Barnhill

## Heartlink program scheduled for May

By Tammy Prine

A program designed to introduce new military spouses to the Air Force way of life is scheduled for Fri., May 13, 2005 from 8:30 a.m. until 2 p.m. in Building 204 at the Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base in Belle Chasse, La.

"The Air Force Spouse ... Heart of the Team" is the slogan for the program, which helps strengthen military families and enhances mission readiness by showing spouses how they are a critical part of the Air Force.

"Our target audience is spouses with less than five years exposure to the military however all spouses are welcome to attend," said Mrs. Monica Stouffer, family support center director.

HeartLink has been around in the active-duty community since 2002. The Reserve version of the program differs significantly

from the active-duty version since the benefits and entitlements are different. The reserve commitment, drill time, pay, promotion, etc. is all different, said Mrs. Stouffer. "We will focus on teaching spouses about military rank, structure, protocol, available support programs and agencies, how families can prepare for deployment, and the importance of their role in the Air Force family."



Spouses will receive briefings from various representatives of wing agencies and squadrons and learn what the agencies can offer.

The Heartlink Program also gives the spouses and caregivers a better understanding of what it is the men and women of the 926th Fighter Wing do.

Other topics introduce spouses to some of the customs and traditions of the Air Force, ranks and rules of protocol. And, there are sessions to explain military pay and allowances, retreat, paying respect to the flag, identification cards and legal services.

Anyone wanting to attend should call Mrs. Stouffer in the family support center and register now. A limited amount of child care can be paid for attendees but spouses must let her know now. She can be reached at (504) 678-3417.

# Legal eagles ready when you need them

By Senior Airman Tallace Encalade

It's that time again, UTA weekend; you report for duty and begin your work day. A few hours pass when you hear "thunderstorm warning and possible tornadoes until 1300 hours."

Shortly after the loudspeaker announcement howling winds and monstrous rain drops begin to fall. A short time later hail the size of golf balls is coming down. Seeing this makes you thankful you were indoors when the storm began. Unfortunately, your vehicle might not have been as lucky.

By the end of the work day the sun is shining and a few puddles and the dents in vehicles are the only signs of the mayhem that occurred earlier.

What can a military member do? The 926th Fighter Wing's Legal Office knows exactly what to do.

Military personnel may be

reimbursed for the cost of repairing vehicle damages incurred while on military duty, annual tour, UTA, etc., on a military installation. The procedure is similar to what you would do if you were involved in an accident while in civilian status.

"The first thing a military

member must do is get a police report," said Master Sgt. Linda C. Cosey, 926th Fighter Wing paralegal. Photos of the damage must be taken and a claim filed through the civilian insurance company.

Members must also obtain two repair estimates and a

weather report for the day and location where the damage occurred.

When everything is settled with the member's civilian insurance they need to bring all the necessary information (including the insurance settlement paperwork) to the legal office. The paperwork will be filed with the claims department at Keesler Air Force Base, Miss. The swiftness of the process is determined by the volume of claims they have received, however it usually takes 30 days for the claim to be processed, said Sergeant Cosey.

This is only one scenario for which members can be compensated. For more information check with Sergeant Cosey in the legal office on UTA weekends at 678-3492.

## ***What legal can do for you***

- ☒ Wills (for members, spouses and retirees)
- ☒ Living Wills
- ☒ Powers of Attorney
- ☒ Basic legal advice
- ☒ Law of Armed Conflict and Ethics Training
- ☒ Professional and Unprofessional Relationship Training

## ***What legal can't do for you***

- ☐ Represent you in a criminal case, military or civilian (Members facing disciplinary action for violating the Uniformed Code of Military Justice are represented by the Area Defense Council at Keesler AFB)

# Air bags provide extra protection for passengers

By Master Sgt. Kenneth Volante  
926th FW safety

For years, the trusty seat belt provided the sole form of passive restraint in cars and trucks. There were debates about the safety of belts especially relating to children, but over time, much of the country adopted mandatory seat-belt laws. Statistics have shown that the use of seat belts has saved thousands of lives that might have been lost in collisions.

Air bags have been under development for many years. The first patent on an inflatable crash-landing device was for aircraft and was filed during World War II. In the 1980s, the first commercial air bags appeared in

automobiles and by the late 1990s new cars and trucks have been required to have been required to have air bags on both driver and passenger sides.

Air bags provide extra protection for belted occupants. They are designed to help keep your head, neck and chest safe in a front-end crash. Most often, an airbag will deploy when a vehicle hits another vehicle or a solid object (like a tree).

An air bag is not a soft, billowy pillow. It comes out of the dashboard at up to 200 miles per hour, faster than the blink of an eye. Because of this great force, an air bag can injure those

who are too close to it.

Here are a few ways to reduce air bag risk.

◆ All vehicle occupants should wear their safety belts on each and every trip. Drivers should sit with at least a 10-inch clearance between the center of the steering wheel or dashboard and their chest. The steering wheel should be tilted upward, not straight across from the torso. Passengers in the front seat should double the distance due to the increased size of the passenger airbag.

◆ Drivers are responsible for making sure that everyone is buckled up.

◆ Infants in rear-facing child safety seats should never be placed in front of active passenger air bags.

◆ Children 12 and under should always be restrained in a child safety seat or a safety belt in the back seat. Even if there isn't a passenger air bag in the vehicle, the safest place for infants and children is properly secured and buckled up in the back seat.

◆ Check the vehicle owner's manual and the instructions provided with the safety seat for correct use information.



## Four awarded diplomas

*Wing members earn associate degrees from the Community College of the Air Force*

### **Master Sgt.**

Terry Goines, FW  
Safety

Cornell Manuel, LGS  
Logistics

### **Tech. Sgt.**

Joseph Dorsey, MXS  
Aviation Maintenance  
Technology

Thomas Rhodes, AMS  
Aircraft Armament Systems  
Technology

## Public Affairs wants you

The 926th Fighter Wing Public Affairs office serves the wing in many capacities. One of the most important functions is to keep the members and their families informed about the unit, its' members, as well as Air Force programs and policies. At times, this can be quite a challenge. With a staff consisting of two full-time and four traditional reservists it can be difficult to stay a breast of what is going with every squadron in the unit.

This is where wing members come in. The Unit Public Affairs Representative, UPAR, is the public affairs person for the squadron and the eyes and ears of the wing PA office.

UPARs contribute news and feature story ideas as well as photographs about their people and their squadron for the wing newsletter.

UPARs are encouraged to write articles but it is not required. Because of the restrictions on allowable print material some training is required.

For more information, contact 1st Lt. Newman Robertson or Staff Sgt. Jerry Mills at 678-9673 or 678-3494 on UTAs.

## Reenlistments

### **Chief Master Sgt.**

Ralph Gaspard, FW

### **Senior Master Sgt.**

Paul Thompson, FW

### **Master Sgt.**

Norman Bailey, SFS

Linda Cosey, FW

Darren Harper, SVF

James Jones, AMX

Timothy Lynch, MSF

David Mercadel, CES

Elizabeth Porter, LRS

Gregory Richards, LRS

### **Tech. Sgt.**

Floyd Belanger, MDS

Lynette Clayton, MDS

Roger Cochran, AMX

Steven Geary, LRS

Valerie Harris, FW

Raymond Harrison, CF

Kevin Martin, LRS

Brian Sharp, MXS

### **Staff Sgt.**

Robert Bedwell, FW

Trinka Matthew, SVF

Michelle Milton, CF

Paul Robert, OLA-AMX

Michael Stovall, AMX

Lesa Webb, MDS

### **Senior Airman**

Randall Miller, MXS

Ronald Sims, AMX

### **Airman 1<sup>st</sup> Class**

Ellis Rodgers, AMX

## Promotions

### **Major**

James Bouchie, SFS

Joe Colunga, MSF

Kristina Haydel, MDS

Tyler St. Amant, LRS

### **Master Sgt.**

Brian Bonnetcarre, LRS

Michael Chipman, AMX

Adrian Franklin, LRS

Patrick Gomez, MXS

Patricia Thompson, MXG

Michael Vicari, MXG

### **Tech. Sgt.**

Steven Bryan, CF

Twyanna Callahan, MDS

Cynthia Gillard, LRS

Sarah Hunter, MDS

Kevin Martin, LRS

Kevin McCoonse, OLA-AMX

Putney Ussin, MSF

### **Staff Sgt.**

James Burns, CES

Roderick Celestine, LRS

Glen Gilbert, OLA-MXS

### **Senior Airman**

Jacob Billiot, AMX

Breck Brown, AMX

Julie Daggett, AMX

Shanah Daniels, LRS

Patrick Dronet, MXS

Harold Enclarde, AMX

Matthew Evans, AMX

Brian Friel, MXS

Vincent Hutton, SFS

Allen Leblanc, AMX

Joseph Maloney, SFS

Sean OBrien, SFS

Dedrick Powell, SFS

Matthew Quarles, MXS

Krystal Ramsey, MDS

Michael Ringsdorf, MDS

David Shipman, AMX

Bryon Wiggins, SVF

### **Airman 1<sup>st</sup> Class**

Warren Cagle, LRS

Lia Tyrone, MXS

Shauvon Willis, MG

### **Airman**

Walter Brown, MOF

Shandreka Leonard, LRS

Paul Tran, AMX



# Short Snorts



## Family Day volunteers needed

The 926th Fighter Wing Family Day will be held during the October 2005 UTA.

This year's theme is Fall Fest/Halloween. Volunteers are needed to help with everything from setup, adult and children's activities to cleaning.

Military and civilian members and their families are all invited to the event. Any one, including family members, interested in helping should call the family support office at (504) 678-3417.

## Senior officer actions

Headquarters Air Force Reserve Command personnel officials at Robins Air Force Base, Ga., announced several senior officer actions in March.

Brig. Gen. Jack Ihle, commander of the 917th Wing, Barksdale AFB, La., retired April 3.

Col. Robert Tarter, mobilization assistant to the deputy chief of Air Force Reserve, Pentagon, replaced General Ihle as the 917th Wing commander.

Col. Kevin Reinert, director of public affairs at Headquarters AFRC, Robins AFB, retires effective July 1.

Lt. Col. Thomas Deall, director of public affairs at Headquarters Air Reserve Personnel Center, Denver, will replace Colonel Reinert as AFRC director of public affairs, at a yet to be determined date. Colonel Deall who was assigned to the 926th FW

from 1994 to 1999 is a colonel selectee.

## Pentagon, Senate seek doubling of GI survivors' Benefit

Pentagon leaders and Capitol Hill legislators want to increase the current available combined government death benefit for families of fallen servicemembers by about \$250,000. If enacted, the proposed change essentially would double the \$262,000 now available to families of servicemembers killed in wartime operations.

DOD and Senate proposals would increase the death gratuity payment to \$100,000, and boost maximum SGLI coverage to \$400,000. The Pentagon would pay the premiums for the extra \$150,000 in SGLI coverage when participating servicemembers are deployed in a combat zone. A plan under discussion, if approved by Congress and the president, would be retroactive to Oct. 7, 2001, the day Operation Enduring Freedom began in Afghanistan. For more information, go to the story on Air Force Link at <http://www.af.mil/news>.

## New health plan extends care for activated reservists

WASHINGTON – A premium-based health care plan recently began for those activated for a contingency anytime since 9/11.

Department of Defense officials announced Tricare

Reserve Select at a Pentagon news conference March 24.

TRS offers a bridge for reservists entering or leaving active duty who are not covered by a civilian employer or other health insurance plan. It's similar to Tricare Standard and comparable to the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plan for federal employees.

Monthly premiums for a reservist are \$75. A reservist and family pay \$233. Premiums will be adjusted annually.

Air Force reservists must serve on active duty for 90 consecutive days or more on or after Sept. 11, 2001, in support of a contingency. And, they must enter an agreement with AFRC to serve in the Selected Reserve for one or more years before leaving active duty. If they got off active duty, they

have until Oct. 28 to apply.

Reservists earn one year of care for every 90 days of continuous active-duty service and every year of service commitment.

Coverage ends when the service agreement ends. It stops sooner if the reservist separates from the Selected Reserve, voluntarily withdraws from the program or fails to pay the monthly premiums.

The Tricare Web site – [www.tricare.osd.mil/reserve/reserveselect](http://www.tricare.osd.mil/reserve/reserveselect) – will have more details. To get updates by e-mail, reservists and their families can subscribe to [www.tricare.osd.mil/tricaresubscriptions/](http://www.tricare.osd.mil/tricaresubscriptions/).

For reservists enrolled in the Transitional Assistance Management Program, coverage will start the day after TAMP ends. (AFRC News Service)

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